



WISCONSIN

DEPARTMENT OF WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT
Division of Workforce Solutions
Bureau of Partner Services

TO: **Economic Support Supervisors
Economic Support Lead Workers
Training Staff
Child Care Coordinators
W-2 Agencies**

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BPS OPERATIONS MEMO

No.: 02-12

File: 2408.1

Date: 02/12/2002

Non W-2 ☐ W-2 ☒ CC ☐

PRIORITY: High

SUBJECT: **SUPPORTIVE SERVICE PLAN**

CROSS REFERENCE: 2002-2003 Wisconsin Works and Related Programs Contract
Response Items 7.2.9.15
W-2 Manual, Chapter 5

EFFECTIVE DATE: Immediately

PURPOSE

This memo provides policy guidance to agencies on the process of supportive service planning with W-2 participants.

BACKGROUND

The 2002-2003 Request for Proposal process included a provision requiring that a W-2 agency, "... ensure that participants who are leaving a W-2 placement, in a case management placement or are diverted from W-2 participation are offered assistance in developing a Supportive Service Plan." Public comments that were collected as part of the W-2 Request for Proposal process included a number of recommendations pertaining to that provision.

While Supportive Service Planning has been an expected part of the W-2 informal assessment process for those placed in a W-2 cash placement (W-2 T, CSJ, CMC, Trial Job), the Department has never iterated in policy a similar expectation for those participants in case management. To reinforce the importance of Supportive Service Planning for those in W-2 case management and those diverted, the Department has made it a requirement under the W-2 agency contracts for 2002-2003. A number of requests have come in from W-2 agencies asking the Department to provide further guidance on this new requirement. This memo is in response to those requests.

When is a Supportive Service Plan Required?

The FEP (or Resource Specialist in the case of someone diverted from W-2) must offer assistance in developing a Supportive Service Plan with each participant who:

- is leaving a W-2 payment placement and placed in Case Management Follow-up;
- is immediately placed in a case management placement including case management services for unemployed Individuals (CMS), case management for those in unsubsidized employment (CMU), non-custodial parent case management, minor parent case management, and case management for pregnant women; or
- is diverted from W-2 participation.

What is a Supportive Service Plan?

The goal of a Supportive Service Plan is to proactively help individuals address family and work-related needs. The Supportive Service Plan must include information necessary to connect participants with supportive services available within the agency as well as other resources in the community, paying particular attention to services that are a part of the agency's Children's Services Network. The Supportive Service Plan must also include strategies for addressing family and work emergencies before these situations result in family crisis and/or loss of employment.

Supportive Service Plan Policy

The Supportive Service Plan must be developed during a face-to-face meeting between the FEP and the W-2 participant in case management (or diverted applicant). The FEP must include a copy of the Supportive Service Plan in the participant's paper file and document in CARES case comments when the Supportive Service Plan meeting occurred as well as any significant issues discussed during the meeting. A participant in a case management position may refuse the offer to develop a Supportive Service Plan. If this occurs, the refusal should be documented in CARES case comments.

Circumstances will vary greatly from one family to another, requiring FEPs to be resourceful as they work through the plan with the participant. Areas of need that should be addressed include:

- Emergency Needs
- Housing Needs
- Household Budgeting/Money Management Needs
- Education and Training Needs (Participant and other family members)
- Legal Assistance Needs
- Employment Support Needs (i.e. Work Connection and Retention Services)
- Child Care Needs (for job search and work)
- Transportation Needs
- Personal and Family Health Care Needs
- Other needs identified by the participant that impede the participant's ability to find and retain a job.

The Supportive Service Plan must include at a minimum, the following elements for each need that is identified:

1. A short-term and long-term plan of action. A short-term plan of action should help the participant address emergency or short-term needs. A long-term plan of action includes the steps necessary to carry out a goal towards self-sufficiency, such as completing an education or training program or securing permanent housing;
2. Resource and referral information for any known community resources that may help to address the need.
3. Information pertaining to programs within the W-2 agency and Job Center that the participant may apply for. Note: The DWS brochure, *Benefits and Services Offered at Wisconsin Works Agencies*, may be used to meet this requirement;
4. FEP Contact information. This is particularly important for those participants in a case management position or who are leaving the program altogether.

Example: Susie has never attempted to get her driver's license. While she was in a CSJ, she was able to take a bus to her work site with little difficulty and preferred this mode of transportation. But her new job requires a much longer bus ride making it difficult for her to get home from work before her children arrive home from school. Susie confides to her worker during the Supportive Service planning meeting that she is considering quitting her job.

Together, the FEP and Susie talk through her options. As a result, her long-term plan of action is to pursue her driver's license and purchase an automobile. Her short-term plan of action is to locate an after-school program that the children may attend so that they are not left alone during the time Susie is on the bus returning home from work. The FEP identifies four community resources that Susie may benefit from. These include: a community driver's education program; a community bank that assists low-income individuals with automobile loans; and two after school programs that are near Susie's home. Through their conversation, she also learns about the Workforce Attachment and Advancement program and requests to be referred for services.

SUPPORTIVE SERVICE PLAN TEMPLATE

Attached is a Supportive Service Plan template that has been developed for agencies to use with participants in a case management placement or who are diverted from the W-2 program. An agency can opt to develop their own supportive service plan form as long as the elements of the template are included.

NOTE: *The Supportive Services Plan is a Microsoft Word document. You can access a copy either by receiving it as an email attachment or downloading it from the DWD Forms Repository. A soft-copy of the document will be e-mailed to each W-2 agency. The text in the document is protected so you cannot alter the wording. However, you can type in as much information as you desire in the allotted spaces; there are no space limitations. You may need to click with your mouse to enable you to type in the spaces allowed or to navigate throughout the document. You can print the document as you would any Word document. You should hand write the agency representative's name in the blank space on Page One and sign on the line allotted for the representative's signature on Page 7.*

If you have problems accessing or downloading the template from the Work Web or the email attachment, please contact Ken Brady at bradyke@dwd.state.wi.us or (608) 267-9846.

Supportive Service Plan as Part of the Informal Assessment Process

While a Supportive Service Plan has been an expected part of the informal assessment process, the use of the attached **Supportive Service Plan template is not mandatory for participants placed in a W-2 cash placement** (W-2 T, CSJ, CMC, and Trial Job). Agencies may continue to use CARES screen WPSS to record service referrals for participants in W-2 cash placement in combination with the W-2 Employability Plan to meet the participants' Supportive Service Plan needs.

The next release of the W-2 Manual, Chapter 5, expected to be received by W-2 agencies in February, will provide additional guidance on the W-2 informal assessment process. The areas of need (emergency needs, housing needs, etc.) found on page two of this memo have been added in the form of a checklist to the informal assessment section of the W-2 manual along with guidelines for assisting the participant in locating resources to address their unmet needs.

Will the Supportive Service Plan be added to CARES?

A long-range project is under development to redesign the Employability Plan (EP) in CARES. As part of this redesign, the elements of the Supportive Services Plan will be incorporated into the EP. When the EP redesign is completed, FEPs will use this one comprehensive form to document both employment and supportive service needs/ goals for all W-2 participants.

ATTACHMENTS

Supportive Services Plan (facsimile)

CONTACT

DWS CARES Information and Problem Resolution Center

Email: carpolcc@dwd.state.wi.us
Phone: 608-261-6317 (Option #1)
Fax: 608-266-8358

Note: Email contacts are preferred. Thank you.



Supportive Services Plan

This is my supportive service plan that W-2 agency representative, _____, and I have developed as I prepare to leave W-2 cash assistance. This plan will help me to be prepared for the expected and some of the unexpected things that might arise for my family and me. I understand that this is my individual plan based on my current situation.

I understand I can contact the W-2 agency at any time:

- To update my Supportive Service plan;
- To locate additional resources; or
- To reapply for W-2 (and be reevaluated for an extension if I have reached my 24-month or 60-month time limit).

I understand the W-2 agency also can help me apply for or refer me for:

- **Food Stamps:** Food Stamps have separate eligibility rules from W-2 and do not have a time limit.
- **Medicaid/BadgerCare:** These programs have separate eligibility rules from W-2 and do not have a time limit.
- **Child Care:** Child care is available for eligible families that are in work, work-related or school/training activities. Child care does not have a time limit.
- **Assistance in Job Advancement, etc.:** Job advancement programs in your area may include Workforce Attachment and Advancement, Welfare to Work, and Workforce Investment Act. If you are interested, ask your FEP or another agency representative about these programs.
- **Emergency Assistance:** If you are facing a current emergency due to fire, flood, natural disaster, energy crisis, homelessness or impending homelessness (including potential evictions) you may be eligible to receive up to \$150 per family member.
- **Heating Assistance** (a.k.a. Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program).
- **Other charitable resources in my community** (for example, food pantries, homeless shelters, medical services, etc.).

Do you or members of your family have any unmet needs that may make it difficult for you to find or keep a job?

1. Emergency Needs

Plan of Action:

Short term:

Long term:

Community Resources:

2. Employment Support Needs

Plan of Action:

Short term:

Long term:

Community Resources:

3. Housing Needs

Plan of Action:

Short term:

Long term:

Community Resources:

4. Household Budgeting/Money Management Needs

Plan of Action:

Short term:

Long term:

Community Resources:

5. Child Care Needs (Primary and Back-up)

Plan of Action:

Short term:

Long term:

Community Resources:

6. Transportation Needs

Plan of Action:

Short term:

Long term:

Community Resources:

7. Legal Assistance Needs

Plan of Action:

Short term:

Long term:

Community Resources:

8. Education and Training Needs

Plan of Action:

Short term:

Long term:

Community Resources:

9. Personal and Family Health Needs

Plan of Action:

Short term:

Long term:

Community Resources:

10. Other needs that may make it difficult for me to find or keep a job

Plan of Action:

Short term:

Long term:

Community Resources:

I understand that I can update this plan on my own or contact the W-2 agency for assistance at any time.

Participant Signature

W-2 Agency Representative Signature

W-2 Agency Contact Information:
